

# COMMON SCHOOL ASSISTANT;

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## COMMON SCHOOL ASSISTANT.

### NECESSITY OF NORMAL SCHOOLS.

It may be affirmed, without the least hesitation, that there is no office in general society more honorable and important than that of an instructor of the young; and none on which the present and future happiness of the human race so much depends. But, in consequence of unfavorable circumstances, the office has been rendered inefficient for the great purposes of human improvement, and the teacher himself degraded from that rank which he ought to hold in the scale of society. It is not a little unaccountable, that, in this country, but few *seminaries* have ever yet been established for training young men for the office of teachers, so that the important ends intended by a system of education may be fully accomplished. A watchmaker, a smith, a mason, a carpenter, or a weaver, serves an apprenticeship of from four to seven years, before he is considered qualified to exercise his profession. A clergyman generally undergoes a course of training for eight or nine years, before he is licensed to perform the functions of the sacred ministry. Even a menial servant, a stable-boy, a cook, or a laundry-maid, must devote a certain portion of time and attention before they are considered as qualified for such occupations. But the office of an instructor of youth is frequently assumed at random. If a man *imagines* he can execute such an office, and publishes an advertisement of his intention, he is believed to be qualified for what he undertakes, although, perhaps, he has never applied his mind to investigate the principles on which instruction should be communicated, nor the objects which education should embrace. Such an *anomaly* in the state of civilized society, in regard to a matter of such vital importance, is a disgrace to the character of an enlightened age, and ought no longer to exist. If we had right views of all the important objects which a system of moral and intellectual education

should embrace, and its extensive effects upon all ranks of society, in relation both to the present and the future world, we should at once admit, that an instructor of youth should be a man possessed of almost universal knowledge, conjoined with a high degree of moral probity and fervent piety.

The proper training of teachers lies at the very foundation of a moral and intellectual system of education; and no class of men but those whose minds are furnished with a large stock of general knowledge are capable of carrying it into effect. It may be laid down as a general principle, that no man can communicate to others knowledge of which he himself is not possessed; and consequently, whatever knowledge it may be judged necessary to impart to the great mass of society, must previously exist in the minds of those who are appointed to instruct them. Even the lowest class of schools, such as infant schools, and the details of primary instruction, require men of general knowledge as superintendents and teachers. For it requires more care and attention, more experience and sagacity, and a more intimate acquaintance with the principles of human nature, to direct the opening intellect in its *first excursions* to the path of knowledge, than to impart to it instructions respecting any particular science in after-life. A common school teacher, for example, should be intimately acquainted with the facts of sacred history, with general history, with physical and geometrical science, with the phenomena of nature, and the processes of the arts, with human nature in its different aspects, and with the scenes of domestic life. For, it is from these sources that he is to derive those facts, exhibitions, descriptions, and illustrations, which are requisite to excite the attention, to interest the affections, and to gratify the curiosity of the infant mind. He must tell them stories borrowed from sacred and civil history—he must describe the appearances of nature—he must perform entertaining experiments—he must tell them of other countries, and the manners of their inhabitants—he must describe the conduct of bad children and of good, and have a story at hand to illustrate his descriptions. He must *vary all his descriptions*, experiments, and anecdotes, as much as possible, so that new scenes and subjects may be gradually opening on their view, to prevent that satiety which a frequent repetition of the same topics would necessarily produce. It is evident, then, that no one but a person possessed of extensive knowledge is qualified fully to accomplish such objects.

### STUDY OF ARITHMETIC—No. 1.

From this science very little is obtained in our district schools, which is of any *practical use*. There is much compulsive, uncertain, and laborious study of arithmetic; but it is often in vain, from the manner in which it is taught. Those who have received nothing more than a common school education, ob-

tain their practical knowledge of the science of numbers, not from their instructions or study in school, but from their own invention, and the rewards of experience.

There is in this country but a small quantity of arithmetic in use which came from the schools; necessity has taught the people what they ought to have learned at school when young, and when they were wasting so much time and money to no purpose. After making such observations as justify these assertions, and reflecting on the misapplication of so much time and effort, it is natural to inquire why this is so.

Are the books in use filled with unintelligible rules and impracticable examples? Do the teachers omit the practical application of the principles they teach? or do the scholars but half know what they have the credit of having learned? To each of these inquiries we may reply, to a great extent, in the affirmative. Many of the books now in use, are blind and difficult to the scholars, and present the art of calculating by numbers in an unnatural, discouraging form.

The magnitude of the examples is so great that the child forms no correct idea of the numbers which constitute them. The reasoning from them, therefore, the child cannot comprehend. These examples, likewise, are abstract numbers. The child's mind is not prepared for perceiving abstract numbers and quantities with sufficient clearness and distinctness, to be able to connect them with practical examples, the only use any one can make of them which is of any value. The pupil's mind is perplexed and wearied with these large unmeaning examples, which he considers altogether useless, and without any practical connexion whatever.

This is the first idea which is obtained from the arithmetic; and it generally goes along with the pupils until they relinquish the unpleasant study. In most cases the figures are new to the child, and the quantities they represent, he can form no conception of; and a darker, more disagreeable study, the pupil hopes he never will have to undertake.—Such is the commencement of the study of arithmetic. What the child dislikes at first, it seldom becomes fond of afterwards.

The first step being but imperfectly understood, the pupil is not fitted to take the second, and consequently, from being unable to help himself, requires the aid of the teacher. The teacher's explanations do not assist him, he is not prepared for them on this point—he does not understand the first step. The instructor supposes the pupil stupid, and the pupil thinks that he has attempted what is too difficult for him to comprehend. The third step is tried, but with less success, for in the science of numbers the after steps always require a knowledge of those which have gone before. In this manner the scholar is forced a short distance into the arithmetic, without knowing where he is, or what he is doing. The whole is a mystery, for in reality nothing has been learned.

### INFANT EDUCATION.

If domestic training, during the three first years of human existence, be either trifled with, or not conducted on rational and moral principles, the arrangements in regard to their future education will be to a certain degree frustrated. The habits acquired, and the impressions made upon the mind of a child, during this period, may have an influence on his improvement and happiness, not only in the present world, but throughout the whole of that endless existence to which he is destined.

The principal objects of infant schools ought to be—to exhibit to the view of children as great a variety as possible of the scenes of nature and the operations of art, either by directing their views immediately to the objects themselves, or by means of pictorial representations—to teach them to *distinguish* one object from another, to mark its peculiar qualities, to *compare* one object with another, and to deduce certain useful truths or conclusions from them—to instruct them how to use their voices, their eyes and ears, their hands and feet—to teach them the properties of numbers, the magnitudes, distances, and relative positions of objects, the forms and habits of animals, the different classes and uses of vegetables and minerals, the various objects to be seen in the fields and gardens, and the general aspect and phenomena of the atmosphere and the heavens—to impress their minds with the existence of a Supreme Being, of their continual dependance upon him, of his goodness, power, and omnipresence, and of the duties they owe him—to teach them the fundamental maxims and rules of the Christian system, and make them reduce them to practice—to train them to kindness and affection towards one another, to habits of cleanliness, neatness, and regularity in all their movements, and to conduct themselves with moral order and propriety, both in the school, the playground, and in their domestic associations—in short, to develop all the intellectual and moral powers of the mind, at a much earlier period than has hitherto been deemed expedient, in order to prevent the growth of vicious habits and false opinions, and to prepare them for all the subsequent instructions and scenes of action through which they may afterwards pass, that they may become blessings, instead of curses, to the world, and rise up in wisdom and knowledge, and in favour with God and with man.

As an illustration of the moral and intellectual effects of infant teaching, I subjoin the following example, taken from Mr. Wilderspin's "Infant Education," as what occurred in the course of his own experience.

"*The Whistle.*—Many of the children were in the habit of bringing marbles, tops, whistles, and other toys, to the school, which often caused much disturbance; I found it necessary to forbid the children from bringing any thing of the kind. After giving notice two or three times in the school, I told them that if any of them brought such things they would be taken from them. In consequence, several things fell into my hands, which I did not always think of retaining; and among other things, a whistle from a little boy. The child asked me for it as he was going home, but having several visitors

at the time, I put the child off, telling him not to plague me, and he went home. I had forgotten the circumstance altogether, but it appears the child did not; for some time after, while I was lecturing the children upon the necessity of telling truth, and on the wickedness of stealing, the little fellow approached me, and said, '*Please, sir, you stole my whistle.*' 'Stole your whistle!' said I, 'did I not give it you again?' 'No, teacher; I asked you for it and you would not give it to me.' I stood self-convicted, being accused in the middle of my lecture, before all the children, and really at a loss to know what excuse to make, for I had mislaid the whistle, and could not return it to the child. I immediately gave the child a half-penny, and said all I could to persuade the children that it was not my intention to keep it. This trifling mistake of mine did more harm than I was able to repair for some time; for if we wish to teach children to be honest, we should never take any thing from them without returning it again." This story shows how necessary it is to teach by example as well as precept—and that children have a clear preception of any discrepancy that may take place in this respect.

### INHUMAN AND IMPOITIC.

In the German "Pedagogic Magazine," for 1833, we are told that "there died lately in *Swabia*, a schoolmaster, who, for fifty-one years, had superintended an institution with old-fashioned severity. From an average inferred from recorded observations, one of the ushers calculated, that in the course of his exertions, he had given 911,500 canings, 124,000 floggings, 209,000 custodes, 136,000 tips with the ruler, 10,200 boxes on the ear, and 22,700 tasks to get by heart. It was further calculated, that he had made 700 boys stand on peas, 600 kneel on a sharp edge of wood, 5,000 wear the fool's cap, and 1,708 hold the rod"—amounting in all to 1,421,208 punishments, which, allowing five days for every week, would average above a hundred punishments every day. There is something extremely revolting in the idea of such a series of punishments being connected with learning; and we may justly infer, that, however much classical learning may have been advanced, very little useful knowledge or moral principle was communicated in that seminary. For, a system of moral and intellectual instruction, calculated to *allure* the minds of the young, is altogether incompatible with such Gothic rudeness and severity.

Corporal punishments have generally a *hardening* effect on the minds both of young and old. A blacksmith brought up his son, to whom he was very severe, to his own trade. The urchin was, nevertheless, an audacious dog. One day the old vulcan was attempting to harden a cold chisel which he had made of foreign steel, but could not succeed. "*Horsewhip it, father,*" exclaimed the youth, "*if that will not harden it, nothing will.*"

### EXTRACTS FROM SIMPSON ON POPULAR EDUCATION.

"No price is enormous which is not out of rule, out of proportion, to the thing purchased. The elevation of an entire people by education is beyond all price." \* \* \*

"No idea can be more preposterous, than that of human beings having no time to study and obey the natural institutions. These laws punish so severely, when neglected, that they cause the offender to lose *tenfold more time* in undergoing his chastisement, than would be requisite to obey them." \*

\* \* "What is the cause of so small a harvest, from so immense a cultivation? Why does not the seed so plentifully sown fructify and produce? There is but one answer to this question, WE ARE NOT A MORALLY EDUCATED PEOPLE." \* \* "Education is a process calculated to qualify man to think, feel, and act, in a manner most productive of happiness." \* \* "An immense pauper population will cling to their abuses with convulsive pertinacity; the only cure for the pauper spirit is popular education." \* \*

"The most effectual method of training teachers, is evidently to place them in the position of pupils, and, when sufficiently advanced, to practise each to conduct the studies and exercises of the rest." \* \*

"Popular ignorance is an enormous national evil. A great proportion of our burdens must be placed to its account; it peoples our prisons and our hospitals, desolates our land with pauperism, and taxes us for the costly machinery of police establishments and criminal judicature; while it largely deducts from the happiness of every feeling man, to witness and live surrounded by the nameless and numberless sufferings which it entails upon an immense portion of our countrymen. From these sufferings they have a claim on that system called the Nation, for deliverance. The associating principle of a nation is protection to ALL from those evils which are too strong for individual exertion. It bestirs itself when pestilence stalks abroad, and the unseen arrow wounds by noonday; this is urgent, and fear performs its office. It rises with all the excitement of the *belligerent faculties* to make war, and pours forth its treasures like a torrent. Pride and rage are uncalculating paymasters. But the war against ignorance is made to wait; it rouses not pride, nor flatters vanity; the spread of that pestilence excites no panic. Benevolence and justice, the moving forces to that contest, are unimpassioned, tranquil and withal slow; and although we never admit that a treaty with popular ignorance is even to be thought of, we are content to live on in so lengthened a truce with the enemy, as to amount to the same thing. What occasion can a man, who is to work at a handicraft trade, have for a course of chemistry, mechanical philosophy, or natural history? Will it make him a better tailor, carpenter, or blacksmith? Will it not, on the contrary, tend to raise his ideas of life, and tempt him to despise labor, and be discontented with his condition? The answer to all this, humbly offered is, that it will materially improve and facilitate his trade; but it will do much more,—it will elevate his character, improve his social condition, and render him both a better and a happier man. A scientific knowledge of nature will suggest to the manual laborer improved and abridged modes of working, counteraction of unwholesome trades, in materials, posture, atmosphere, &c.; it will show him the value

of cleanly habits, fresh air, and muscular exercise, and the physical sufferings resulting from excess, vice, and especially the abuse of ardent spirits. It will elevate the character of the laborer, for it will humanize him, improve the furniture of his mind, by substituting truth and interesting subjects of thought for superstitions, prejudices, and all sorts of impracticabilities; deliver him out of the hands of imposters, political, fanatical, medical and literary; qualify him for a wise use of the elective franchise, afford him delightful employment for his leisure from toil; exalt his impressions of his God, and render his religion sincere and practical. If he is to spend several years at school, if he is not to be set at once to learn the kind of toil called his trade, and doomed, all beyond, to deepest ignorance, what better can he learn than the objects of nature, and his own relation to them? At the least, he is no worse for this improved store in his mind, the acquisition of which has been a source of delight to his earlier years, and has effected a decided melioration of his general character." \* \* \*

#### BARON LUVIER ON PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

His biographer says, "*The schools for the people* attracted his attention in all countries, and were to him an unceasing theme of meditation." "He believed that instruction would lead to civilization, and civilization to morality; and, therefore, that *primary instruction* should give the people every means of fully exercising their industry without disgusting them with their condition." "Give schools, before political rights; make citizens comprehend the duties which society imposes on them; teach them what are political rights before you offer them for their enjoyment. Then all meliorations will be made without causing a shock; then each new idea thrown upon good ground will have time to germinate, to grow, and to ripen without convulsing the social body." "He could not listen to a few pages of a book that taught nothing, without feeling the greatest irritation. It was his usual habit, as he ate his breakfast, to look over the books for the use of the primary schools sent for inspection."

#### CRIME AND LEGISLATION IN GREAT BRITAIN.

According to a Report of a Committee of the House of Commons, there were confined in prisons and bridewells, during seven years, ending in 1831, 122,000 persons accused of crimes, or at the rate of 17,123 per annum. Of these, 85,000 were convicted of the crimes laid to their charge, so that 12,142 was the average amount of the yearly convictions. It has been estimated, in regard to juvenile delinquency, that more than 1,500 boys, in London alone, are employed in thieving, picking pockets, and committing all kinds of petty depredations. It is also found, that crimes, so far from diminishing, are, in this country, regularly increasing. From the Report of a late Committee of Parliament, it appears, that, during the last 14 years they have increased in the proportion of *twenty-four to ten*, that is, they have been far more than doubled in the course of that short period.

These statements exhibit a frightful view of the extent and the progress of crimes.—

Nor is it to be wondered at, when we consider the present state of education, and the manner in which it is conducted—the principles on which our penal code has been constructed, and the manner in which our criminal laws are executed. Our penal code, throughout all its departments, is deeply imbued with the spirit of *revenge*. To produce *pain* and *disgrace* to the criminal appears to be its principal object; and, in the great majority of instances, it has the effect of hardening and rendering more desperate the persons whom it ought to have softened and reformed. To reform the criminal, to cure him of the moral disease which led him into crime, to impart appropriate instruction to his mind, and to prepare the way for his restoration to society as a renovated character, are circumstances which seem to have been entirely overlooked in the arrangements connected with our criminal legislation. In this respect a dreadful infatuation seems to have seized upon our legislators, implying a deficiency both of wisdom, of humanity, and of benevolence. When certain species of crime are on the increase, laws still more severe are enacted, and put in execution with all the pomp and rigour of authority and revenge. If whipping and imprisonment, toiling at the tread-wheel, laboring in the hulks, and transportation beyond seas, are insufficient to arrest the progress of crime, then *executions* without number are resorted to, in order to sweep the culprits at once from the face of the earth. One enactment after another issues from the source of power; one law comparatively mild is cancelled, and another more severe substituted in its place; a severe punishment is sometimes modified and rendered less severe; the sentence of death is commuted into transportation for life, and a year's labor at the tread-mill for seven years' transportation. Every year new enactments, laws, and regulations, with alterations and modifications of former laws, issue from the legislative department of government; but all is of no avail to stop the progress of immorality and crime. Nor need we wonder at such a result; it is precisely such as we ought to expect from such a mode of legislation as now exists. Our state physicians act nearly in the same manner as the quack, who, instead of striking at the root of a sore which is undermining the constitution, covers it over with a slender skin, and leaves the internal *virus* to gather strength till it break out in incurable ulcers, throughout every part of the system. They attempt to lop off the twigs and branches from the tree of crime, while they leave the root and the trunk to break forth afresh in still greater luxuriance. No efficient *preventive* system has as yet been arranged to strike at the root of crime, to prevent its growth, and to make the machinery of society move onward with smoothness and harmony. And, so long as preventive measures are overlooked, and moral training neglected, the severest laws that can be framed will be altogether inefficient to counteract the criminal propensities of the human heart.—*Thomas Dick, L. L. D.*

This may be considered an universal maxim—As is the teacher, so is the school.

ADDRESS OF THE HON. CHARLES HUMPHREY, DELIVERED BEFORE THE ITHACA EDUCATION SOCIETY, SEPT. 29, 1835.

Nothing could gratify us more than to have room enough to give our readers the whole of this address. It is full of instruction of the most valuable character. The Hon. Speaker has not only shown himself a true patriot, but an active, warm philanthropist. He has done what but few statesmen have an inclination to do; he has closely observed the character and condition of our common schools, and the workings of our school system. The address is eminently practical; it presents a full statement of the evils and defects in the schools, and clearly and forcibly suggests their appropriate remedies. Says Mr Humphrey,—

"Whether we regard education with reference to the political, social, or individual condition of men, it is a cause in every way worthy of the best efforts of the patriot and the philanthropist. Regarded as a duty, if there is a way in which a man can best repay society for the advantages and protection it affords him, it is this. Regarded as a charity, if an act of benevolence can be conceived in which the giver and receiver are mutually and most effectually blessed, it is this."

#### HALF EDUCATED.

"An educated people will not long remain subject to the abused power of their rulers. But it must be borne in mind, that the most difficult people to govern, are the half-educated."

What an important truth is this, for our legislators and patriots! There must be an equality of education, as far as practicable. All, in this government, must, as far as possible, have an equal start. Educate a few, and intelligence, through the love of power, will take the advantage of ignorance. We hope this truth from the Hon. Speaker will be deeply felt.

#### THE ELEMENTS OF MOBS.

We still quote from the address:

"For our present purpose we need but to answer a single question; of whom are these mobs usually, if not invariably, composed? If time would permit, we might show that most of our sectional jealousies the heart burnings and hatred growing out of the different conditions of men; the disposition to array those of one occupation against those of a different occupation; those of one religion against those of a different religion; and the thousand evils of this description, could not exist to an alarming, or even troublesome extent, amongst an educated people. They could not be turned into political questions, unless there were fools as well as knaves amongst us. If gross ignorance were expelled, the arts of the demagogue would fail, for the want of materials to act upon. Daily observation shows us, that intelligent and educated men make the most peaceable, orderly, well disposed and useful members of society."



## HISTORY OF THE N. YORK SCHOOL SYSTEM.

"The first public effort was made under the colonial government, in the city of New-York, early in the last century, for establishing a public school in that city, and fifty pounds appropriated annually. The guardians of this fund applied it to their own purposes. The public derived but little benefit from it, and the act expired by its limitation.

"In 1732, an act was passed to establish a literary institution in the city of N. York. Eighty pounds was appropriated. This was the origin of King's (now Columbia) College, to which large public and private endowments have since been made.

"In 1784, the Regents of the University were incorporated, with powers to incorporate Colleges and Academies; and with supervisory powers over them; or, in the language of the legislature, as 'The guardians of the education of the youth of this state.'

"In 1787, the act was extended, and their powers more particularly defined and enlarged.

"In 1790, an act was passed authorizing the regents to lease certain lands belonging to the state, and apply the rents to the use of colleges and academies. They also appropriated 1,000 pounds from the treasury for the same purpose. In this act, it is declared to 'be the duty of a free and enlightened people to patronize and promote science and literature, as the surest basis of their liberty, property and happiness.'

"In 1784, a lot was reserved in each of the military townships, for promoting the gospel, and a public school or schools, and a lot for promoting literature.

"The regents in their annual reports frequently recommended the establishment of common schools.

"In 1793, it was urged by Gov. Clinton, in his message, and in that year the act was passed which is the basis of our present system. By this act, 20,000 pounds was appropriated, to be allotted to the several counties, the supervisors of which were to distribute it to the towns. The towns to raise by tax half as much as was allotted to them. Money was also to be raised in New-York and Albany for the same purpose. Commissioners and trustees were provided for, similar to our present system.

"In 1801, \$100,000 was authorized to be raised by lottery, which was the commencement of the literature and common school fund. In 1827, \$150,000 was added to the literature fund. In 1811, the present common school system was matured, and has continued without any material change in its organization. With the details of this system, we are all familiar. In 1815, 500,000 acres of land were appropriated to the common school fund, and other large additions have since been made to it."

"Our system is well and efficiently organized, and as far as public agents, in its general administration, are concerned, wisely and faithfully carried into operation in all its parts. The public provisions are commensurate with the means of a patriotic, enlightened and enterprising people; for such we may, with just pride, claim to be the character of our state."

## IMPORTANCE OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

"From accurate data, it is ascertained that in this state 98 out of every 100 receive all their education at the common schools. The colleges and academies being dependant upon their character, in a great measure, for patronage and support, and necessarily under the guidance of intelligent and educated men, require no extraneous interference to accomplish the purpose for which they are designed. Individual interest and enterprise are enlisted in the aid of the private and public advantages proposed by their operations. But it is not so with common schools. This great institution, the basis of our political security and of individual happiness, seems to require something more than a mere invitation or opportunity, to induce the great body of the people to avail themselves of its benefits.

"It is conceded that the operation of our system is defective—that the benefits proposed have not been realized in practice.—From official reports, and a careful survey of the whole state, it appears that the practical operation of the system is very similar in all the districts—that with few exceptions, and the most of them accidental, the defects which are found to exist in one, pervade the whole. What these defects are, every community can answer for themselves. This community can do so. We have the answer in detail in the report of our executive committee. Incompetent teachers are employed. The school-houses are not judiciously located, and are not constructed with a view to the comfort of those who attend school.—The standard of education is not sufficiently exalted. It is too far below the capacity of children, and instruction has not kept pace with the improvements of the age.

"It is evident that the majority of the people, do not appreciate the advantages of an education, and while they acknowledge the force and solemnity of the obligation, to afford their children and dependents some means of instruction, make a kind of compromise with their consciences by sending them a limited time to school, without seeming to know or care what they do there—or what the qualifications of the teacher may be, provided he does not charge too high. This remark applies to a vast many respectable men, whose circumstances afford them no excuse.

"There are many again whose poverty affords a pretext, seemingly plausible. But the very object of the institution is to bring the means of education within their reach.

"But the education which is intended to fit men for respectability in the ordinary avocations of life—to qualify them for the transaction of business, and temper their moral character, is as a general question to be expected only from the common schools.—We need not be told of the influence of early impressions upon the future character of men. On this subject we can all speak from our own experience and observation. At these schools children imbibe useful impressions from being well instructed, or bad impressions from being badly instructed; or what is perhaps even worse, the seeds of idleness and vice are permitted to take root in

their minds, in the absence of all instruction, either positively good or bad.

"The characters of not less than 600,000 children, who are soon to exercise a controlling influence over the destinies of this state, on whom its prosperity, and the freedom and stability of its institutions are to depend, are now forming, to an important extent, in these seminaries.

"They are, therefore, objects of the deepest solicitude, and ought to receive our unremitting and careful attention."

## THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A TEACHER.

"A teacher should be a person of matured understanding, of good moral character, conciliating in his disposition, and chaste in his deportment, should be able to win the affections and command the respect of his scholars. He should be a man of general learning, and possess a tact at communicating instruction. It is a great, but not uncommon mistake, to suppose for example, that a person who can merely read is as competent to teach the art to another as a well educated person could do; or that one who has merely learned the fundamental rules of arithmetic can teach those rules as well or profitably as one who is familiar with their application to the higher branches of arithmetic and the mathematics. A teacher should be able to make the process of elementary instruction, auxiliary to the cultivation of the reasoning faculties, to the art and habit of thinking, and as he will in his manners and morals constitute a model, which his pupils will imitate, it is of vast importance to the happiness of families and individuals, and the public well being, that, in the impressive language of Mr. Dix, "his example should at least carry with it no lessons of evil."—Does not this view of the subject, which we have taken, demonstrate that the cause of education is not held in sufficient estimation by the community? That there is an almost criminal disregard of the privileges which the beneficence of legislation has conferred upon us? Would any sensible farmer employ a girl of sixteen, without experience or physical capacity, to conduct the operations of his farm, and submit the management and direction of it to her? Certainly not. And why not? The answer is obvious. He would know that a failure of his crops, and derangement of his business would be the consequence. This evil would be temporary, and susceptible of a speedy remedy.—And yet we find too many, whom it would be unjust to charge with a want of sense, who, for the sake of saving a few dollars, are willing to entrust the business of educating and forming the manners and moral character of their children, to unfit and incompetent persons; an infinitely more important concern, because its consequences are more enduring, and the evil less susceptible of remedy. The utmost that is calculated upon from such a teacher, is to instruct children in the mere elementary branches. The useful application of these branches—the training of the moral character—the refinement of the manners—and the cultivation of the reasoning faculties, forms no part of the plan; and yet, these are all within the legitimate province, and may form a part of the ordinary course of instruction in a well regulated common school.

"M. Victor Cousin, in his report upon the Prussian system, remarks that 'the best plans of instruction cannot be executed, except by the instrumentality of good teachers;' and the state has done nothing for popular education, if it does not watch that those who devote themselves to teaching be well prepared; then suitably placed, encouraged and guided in the duty of continued self-improvement; and, lastly, promoted and rewarded in proportion to their advancement, or punished according to their faults."

#### NEGLECT OF PARENTS AND SCHOOL OFFICERS.

"Another serious evil is the neglect of the inspectors, and indeed of parents, in visiting schools. If the operations of this society extended no further than the frequent visitation of the schools, its beneficial influence in the encouragement which it would give to teachers, and the emulation it would excite amongst the scholars, would well repay the benevolent efforts of its members.

"The neglect of public officers, and the apathy and indifference of parents in this respect has a most blighting influence upon the zeal and self-respect of teachers, and upon the ambition and spirit of their pupils.—The most effectual way to make a vagabond or rogue of a man is to treat him as one, and the converse of the proposition is true in every supposable case." \* \* \* \*

"The operations of this society will be confined to the town of Ithaca. If its influence shall be found beneficial, it is hoped that it will extend to other towns of the county, and be met by corresponding or better devised and directed efforts in every part of the state.

"It is to be hoped that some district of this town will be found enterprising, public spirited, and, I may add, wise enough to disregard trifling pecuniary considerations, and establish a liberal and well-regulated school. They will not only reap the immediate advantage themselves, but it will serve as a model for imitation. Good as well as bad example is contagious."

We are greatly indebted to the Hon. Speaker for the extracts we have made from his patriotic address. For this privilege we feel assured that our readers will perceive this number greatly enriched with many valuable hints and suggestions.

#### THE LOVE OF READING IN CHILDREN.

[The following remarks are from "The Schoolmaster and Advocate of Education," published monthly at Philadelphia. Price \$3 per annum.]

We would recommend to all parents who have at heart the best interests of their children, to infuse into them, in the earliest years, a love of reading. The advantages of such a habit are great, and it exercises an influence over the destinies of the future man which few, without reflection, would suppose. The effects, even in childhood, are beneficial, and evident to the most careless observer. The reading child is superior in temper, docility, and knowledge to his book-hating companions; he indulges less in idleness and play; he is not so fond of mischief;

and he does not contract so many bad habits. He takes, at school, a stand higher than his fellows; and, when grown to manhood, outstrips them in most of the rivalries of life.

\* \* \* \* \*

Every father, especially every father living in the country, should provide himself with a library of entertaining and instructive books, taking care to add to it from day to day according to his means, such new productions as are really of value. A few dollars thus laid out—and, dear as books are supposed to be, a very small sum will procure an excellent little family library—will bring him a better interest, if he can look for it in the advancement of his offspring, than if invested in the most gainful of stocks.

\* \* \* \* \*

Upon our farmers, therefore, in particular, should be enjoined the duty of providing little libraries for the use of their families.—From the nature of their occupation, and their situation at a distance from towns, the education of their children must be defective; and to them books will prove more valuable, as they are actually more necessary, than to the children of any other class.

#### SCHOOL BOOKS.

In pursuance of our engagements with the public to designate, from time to time, such text or class books as should appear to us, upon examination, to be most suitable for use in common schools, we now invite the attention of our readers to a work on that important, and indeed indispensable branch of education, ENGLISH GRAMMAR. We refer to a treatise by Professor Bullions, of the Albany Academy, published about two years since by Mr. O. Steele, of this city. It was, as we learn, immediately upon its appearance, unanimously adopted as a text-book by the trustees of the two principal academies of this city, and met, from various quarters, with the highest testimonials to its superior excellence. We consider it as decidedly the best arranged, most correct, and, for its size, most comprehensive manual of grammar among all the numerous books upon this subject that have fallen under our observation, or that, as far as we know, have yet appeared. What, in our judgment, adds greatly to its value, is the well devised exercises which it contains, illustrative of the various definitions and rules, and immediately following them, severally, throughout the book. The work, small and cheap as it is (being about 200 pages, and selling, we believe, at retail, for 50 cents,) also contains much very useful matter, not to be met with to our knowledge in any other work of this sort. Among other things of this nature to be found in it, are some valuable critical remarks upon our language, and a long "list of improper expressions," which unhappily have crept into use in different parts of our country. Following the principles of Murray, and adopting, in the main, the arrangement of Lennie, the ablest of his successors, the author's aim, as he states in his preface, has been to correct what was erroneous, to retrench what was superfluous or unimportant, to compress what was prolix, to elucidate what was obscure, and to determine what was left doubtful, in the books already in use. We cannot more appropriately

or emphatically express our favorable opinion of this work than to add, in conclusion, that in this excellent design we think the author has most happily succeeded.

#### PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ECONOMY.

By Theodore Sedgwick—Part First. Published by the Harpers, and dedicated to James Wadsworth, Esq. of Genesee.

The main object of the able and philanthropic author, in this volume, is "to show the value of property or wealth, and how it may be acquired." Such a book as this was much wanted, and we think Mr. Sedgwick has well accomplished the object he intended. We wish it could be read by every citizen. There is a large class of young men who are reckless in scattering money, and improvident in preparing for the duties and rational enjoyments of life. They seem not to consider the pleasures of independence, nor the power money will give them of doing good to their fellow-men. They live only for the present moment and for themselves. Such, and all who wish to acquire property and make a right use of it, should study this book. Its doctrines are sound and full of instruction; and its style is familiar, lucid, and forcible. We tender the author our own sincere thanks for the instructions he has given ourselves; and heartily wish his book could be introduced in all our common schools, as a reading class-book. We know of no book better adapted to this purpose.

We present two extracts, and feel grieved that we have not room for more:—p. 153.

"These subjects are no longer mysteries, when people give their thoughts to them, and become familiar with the words wealth, economy, capital, labor, cost of production, &c. Common people are more puzzled about words than things; they are often acquainted with the things, but they do not understand the signs; they do not understand the words. If learned writers would use the words, or any thing like them, that the common man employs to express his ideas upon these subjects, the mystery would disappear like the fog of the morning. It is very easy to puzzle a plain, common mind with definitions, and a multitude of words, and learned explanations, when men of education write only for each other, or for a few hundreds or thousands. This is one of the reasons why the common people have been so long kept in ignorance. There is aristocracy in governments, in manners, modes of living, laws; there is also the aristocracy of learning. But, surely, if there be any benefaction which one poor, suffering fellow-creature is entitled to from another, it is knowledge. Franklin wrote for all mankind, and so may other men upon most subjects; and if this were the case, learning would be diffused every where, and, like the dew, fertilize the field of the poor as well as the rich man."

Our readers will agree with us, that this extract is not only truth and eloquence, but it is *philanthropy*. It is a small portion of that deep and glowing vein of humanity and benevolence which runs through and enriches the whole work. How true it is that the most powerful minds are the most simple. He who is master of his subject is always plain, pure, and perspicuous; always luminous, and often eloquent.

Again, p. 164:—"There is another principle, that shows that there is *useful* work enough to employ all the industry and power that man has, and it is this: He is not, like the brute, at a stand at the end of a single generation, but has the capacity of advancing forever. He has not only the power, but he is advancing, and has been from the beginning of the world; not every individual, or generation, or nation, but man; the human race, human nature, civilization, improvement; these are always moving forward. Man admires new forms of beauty, grace, and elegance, not the favored and educated man alone, but all men, rich and poor, they love improvement; God has formed their minds for it."

We close by saying, we hope every child and youth will read this book.

#### ON TEACHING WRITING, No. II.

Professor Jacotot's system of education, instead of commencing with elementary lines, curves, and letters, in what is called text-hand, a complete sentence, written by the master, or engraved in *small hand*, is put before the eyes of the pupil, which he is directed to copy. He writes, as well as he can, the first word—suppose "*The*;" and no further progress must be made till, by an attentive comparison of his own performance with the original copy, he becomes conscious of the faults and defects of the former. Such questions as these are then put. *Q.* Is this *T* well made? *A.* No; it is too high, or too short, or too long. *Q.* Could it be made better? *A.* I think so. *Q.* What must you then do to improve it? *A.* Make it longer, or broader, or shorter, &c. *Q.* How could you have made it better at first? *A.* By paying more attention, &c. But I leave it to the writing-master to adopt such plans for teaching the formation of written characters as his experience may deem most expedient, and conclude with two or three general remarks.

The principal object of writing is to communicate our sentiments to others, or to record the fleeting thoughts that pass through our own minds for the subject of future consideration. The art of writing should therefore be made to bear, as soon as possible, on the practical purposes of life. Instead of continuing children for years at the formal practice of writing from "copy-lines," as soon as they acquire a tolerable hand, they should be accustomed to write forms of mercantile accounts—statements of arithmetical operations—cards of invitation—letters of friendship or business—forms of address and superscriptions—and whatever else they may afterwards have occasion to practice in the actual business of life. The miscellaneous

sentiments embodied in the lines and pieces which they copy, should uniformly contain religious and moral precepts and sentiments easily understood, and statements of historical, geographical, astronomical, and scientific facts, in order that no opportunity may be lost in familiarizing the mind to useful knowledge.

As soon as the pupil is able to handle a pen with some degree of dexterity, he should be accustomed to write forms of letters, narratives, essays, or real epistolary correspondence. He may likewise, at this period, be gradually taught the *art of composition*. This may be effected, in the first instance, by reciting to him a striking narrative, or an interesting historical fact, and desiring him immediately to repeat it in his own style, and afterwards to write it down nearly in the same manner. After being accustomed to write, a few simple narratives, descriptions of some objects connected with natural history, or some striking moral sentiments, may be read over several times in his hearing, as exercises in composition. He may next be requested to give a narrative of any excursion he has made, either alone or in company, and a description of the scenes he has visited, the events that occurred, and the friends by whom he was entertained. He may also be desired to describe the rural scenery around him, and the streets, lanes, public buildings, and other remarkable objects connected with the town or village in which he resides.

#### To the Editor of the Com. School Assistant:

DEAR SIR—I was glad to see the publication of the "District School," but am much more rejoiced to see the appearance of the "Common School Assistant." It is time we were at the work of improving and extending our common schools as a nation—that is, that *individuals* should take hold of the work, till it can be said that the *nation* is engaged in it. It is a shame to talk before the world and boast even of our overflowing national treasury, and of the unbounded prosperity of the several states, while at least a million and a half of children, the future freemen of the nation, are growing up without the advantages of even a common school education. The public mind must be reached—the appalling apathy broken up; and as the press has become one established mode of doing this on all subjects, I most heartily approve of your publication. I enclose \$5, and wish you to forward twenty copies. My object will be to distribute them gratuitously about this state; and I should rejoice if it would be the means of getting you five times that number of subscribers.

You may direct to Rev. Theron Baldwin, Jacksonville, Illinois.

Yours, &c.

THERON BALDWIN.

#### STUDY OF GRAMMAR—No. II.

In communicating to the young a knowledge of grammar, or of any other subject, that plan which is the easiest and the most interesting should of course be adopted. All intricate and abstruse definitions and discussions ought to be avoided, and nothing attempted but what is level to their comprehensions, and which may be illustrated and

explained by *sensible* images and representations. In endeavoring to impart a general idea of the elements of grammar, I would, in the first instance, lead the pupils to a position where they would have a distinct view of an extensive landscape, where they might see either ships sailing, birds flying, wind-mills in motion, men digging the ground, or working with saws and hammers, carriages moving, or reapers cutting down the corn. I would then inform them (if they are acquainted with numbers,) that there are fifty thousand words in the English language, but that they may be reduced to about *eight* different *classes* or kinds; or, in other words, that all the words they see in the different books that come into their hands, however numerous they may appear, may be arranged into classes. I would next tell them that one of these kinds of words is called *nouns*, or terms which express the *names* of all kinds of objects, and desire them to point out, in the landscape before them, some of those objects designated nouns. They would find no difficulty in complying with such a requisition, and instantly "a house, a tree, a ship, a church, a flower, a man, a horse," and similar names would be cheerfully vociferated. They would next be told that certain *qualities* or *properties* belong to every object; that a house may be *high* or *low*, *large* or *small*, *white*, *gray*, or *red*—a tree, *tall*, *thick* or *slender*—that a feather is *light*—gold *heavy*—butter *soft*, &c.; and that the words, *high*, *low*, *light*, *heavy*, *soft*, &c. belong to that class termed *adjectives*, or words expressive of *qualities*. Some particular objects might then be mentioned, and the pupils requested to point out some of the qualities which they may possess. For example, *Boy*. After two or three qualities that a boy may possess are stated, they would soon apply the adjectives *good*, *bad*, *lazy*, *diligent*, *tall*, *handsome*, *mischievous*, *beautiful*, and other qualities. A *Table*, *round*, *oval*, *square*, *oblong*, *high*, *low*, *long*, *short*, &c., adding the word *table* to each of these qualities. To diversify this exercise a little, a quality might be mentioned, and the pupils desired to name any objects to which it will apply. For instance, the quality *round*,—when such answers as the following might be given: "A *hat* is round, a *wafer* is round, a *saucer* is round, a *shilling* is round, the *sun* and *moon* are round. In like manner *high*, which applies to towers, mountains, trees, the clouds; and *soft*, which applies to butter, dough, jelly, slime, pudding, snow, &c.

I would next direct their attention to that class of words which express *actions*, and request them to look around upon the landscape, and tell me if they perceive any thing *in motion*, or shifting its position from one place to another; (for motion, either mental or corporeal, is implied in every action.) Should they hesitate in answering this request, an instance or two may be pointed out; but they will seldom be at a loss, and will at once reply, "Ships are moving—birds are flying—the horse is trotting—men are walking—the mason is breaking stones—the trees are waving—the laborer is digging the earth." They may also be told to stretch out their hands, to walk a few steps, to strike the ground with a rod, to look up to the sky, or to perform any other action that



may be judged expedient, and then informed that the words expressive of such actions, as *walking, striking, breaking, flying, &c.* are denominated *verbs*. Having engaged them several times in such exercises, till a clear idea of the nature of a verb is communicated, it will be easy to explain the difference between *active* and *neuter* verbs, and three tenses, the *past*, the *present*, and the *future*. They may be told, for example, that masons *broke* stones yesterday, and *will break* stones to-morrow—that James *wrote* a letter to his cousin a few days ago, and *will* probably *write* another in a few days hence—and that birds *flew* through the air last year, and *will fly* in the same manner in the year to come. The *quality* of an action, and the *manner* in which it may be performed, or any *circumstance* that happens to be connected with it, may also be explained and illustrated. Thus, they may be asked, in what manner the clouds move, and the birds fly—*slowly* or *swiftly*? In what manner the laborer performs his work—*stolenly* or *neatly*, *cheerfully* or *heavily*? In what manner the river runs—*smoothly* or *rapidly*? How James behaves during the time of instruction—*attentively* or *foolishly*? How the house to which I point is situated—*pleasantly*, *awkwardly*, or *disagreeably*? They may then be told, that such terms as *slowly, swiftly, smoothly, pleasantly, &c.* which express certain qualities of actions, constitute another class of words, denominated *adverbs*.

Words which express the *relations* in which objects stand to each other, may be next pointed out. They may be directed to observe that a certain house (pointing to it) stands *near* a tower, a river, or a large tree—that a house on the right hand is distant *from* another on the left—that the clouds are placed *above* the earth—that the grass is *under* our feet, and that a certain mansion is situated *upon* the declivity of a hill. Such relations might also be illustrated by desiring one of the pupils to walk to a certain point, suppose a tree, and then to return *from* the point to his former position;—or to place himself in a position *before* the rest of the pupils, and afterwards in a position *behind* them—when the relative positions of objects denoted by the terms *near, above, to, and from, before, and behind*, may be familiarly explained, and designated by the word *prepositions*. An idea may be given of another class of words, which stand instead of names, by asking such questions as these:—How does that house look among the trees, on the opposite bank of the river? The answer might be, “It looks beautifully.” How does that lady walk? *She* walks gracefully. What kind of a scholar is John? *He* is a good scholar. What did two wicked boys do to Arthur a few days ago? *They* struck him with their fists. By such examples it will be easy to show that the words *it, she, he, and they*, stand in the place of *house, lady, and John*; that *they* and *their* refer to the wicked boys, and that *him* stands instead of *Arthur*. They may be then informed, that such words are distinguished by the name *pronouns*; and, by a few more familiar instructions, they may be made acquainted with the nature and use of the nominative, possessive, and objective cases, both singular and plural, by which they are varied. In a similar way the nature and use

of the *article* and of *conjunctions* may be pointed out and illustrated.

#### SOCIETY IN ENGLAND FOR PROMOTING EDUCATION.

The report of the society for the present year, is a highly interesting and important document. During the past year the extent to which its operations have been carried far exceeds that of any other period of its history. The circulation of books and tracts has amounted to two millions two hundred and seventy-eight thousand and forty-eight, being an increase of 116,855 upon the circulation of the year preceding; in addition to which, the committee of General Literature and Education has circulated, including the Saturday Magazine, 4,747,187. The receipts of the society during the year, including £605 on account of the Special Fund for the Foreign Transaction Committee, have amounted to £73,236.

It is highly gratifying to learn, that whereas the parliamentary report on education shows an increase between the years 1817 and 1835 of a little more than 100 per cent. in the number of children under instruction in the kingdom, the accounts of the National Society, during the same period, show an increase of above 300 per cent.; so that the work of education in that society's hands has been carried forward with an acceleration three times greater than that which has been created by the exertions of the public at large.

Much might be done in this country if individuals would unite in this manner.

#### GEOGRAPHY—No. I.

And first, scholars do not easily perceive, and in many instances never, the true figure and motions of the earth, from its representation on the plain surface of maps; in other words, there is a want of globes, or substitutes for them. From the description of the earth in the geography, the child is told that the earth is spherical, but from the representation of it on the map, it appears a plane. That which is addressed to the eye is much more impressive and lasting than that which is made known by words. To the child, the earth appears a plane, and the map represents it as such. No means are taken to correct this wrong impression. It is true that the book says, and the teacher likewise, that the earth is round like a ball; and the pupil learns this, but he never *knows* it.—Children, who have studied geography without a globe for years, have frequently been heard to say, when accidentally meeting with one “why, you don't mean that the earth is round like that, and turns over so?”—“Certainly; have you never learned that?” “Yes, but we never *knew* it before.” By the help of the globe, too, another error obtained from the map is corrected. The pupil perceives that but one half of the earth can be seen at the same time; and by the help of a candle at night, or in a dark room the motion of the Globe shows in a moment the true cause of day and night. Of all this the child remains ignorant with no other assistance than the map.

Now in the country not one school out of a thousand is furnished with a globe; nor is there a teacher among as great a number

who has ingenuity or inclination sufficient to supply a substitute. The consequence is, that after all the study, the pupils are ignorant of these two facts which lie at the foundation of this department of knowledge.

Secondly, pupils with young and weak minds, limited knowledge, and ignorant of the vocabulary of geographical terms, are required to look round, and through the whole solar system, and over every part of the habitable or uninhabitable earth. The whole of creation, as far as man's vision or imagination ever went, is brought at the same time before the unexpanded infant mind. The present system of teaching geography requires the child to grasp this “huge globe,” with all its myriads of animate and inanimate existences, and the innumerable bodies in the heavens with all their splendor and sublimity.

These are all presented at once. The mind is confused, lost; and by directing the eye towards objects far beyond our vision, we remain ignorant of the things around us, and never behold those in the distance. This evil arises from the books now in use in most of our schools. This necessary stretch of mind soon fatigues the pupil, and the multiplicity of objects prevents any one from appearing clear and distinct.

Thirdly, scholars learn the definitions of the names of places, but do not form any idea of their situation and appearance. For example, “a bay is a portion of water extending up into the land,” is repeated by the pupil; but not in one instance out of five hundred is there any idea of the position of this body of water. Scholars commit their lessons in geography in the same manner they do their lesson in the catechism or their tables.—They are never told that *this language describes objects and places*.

The study is a business of merely remembering words, when it should be that of *conceiving distant objects and places*. The child does not (as geography is now taught) make a transfer of the mind to the thing described, but directs his whole energies in fixing the words of the book in the memory. Thus the study of geography is little more than reciting from memory a number of words and sentences in the order of the book, having no meaning to them whatever.

Fourthly, the representations of places and objects on the map, by marks, lines, and spaces, do not cause the child to conceive their true position, appearance, and location. The language of the map has no more resemblance (or if any, not enough to be of any assistance to the pupil) to the things it represents than the language of the book. What similarity is there between a shade on the map and a mountain? What is there in the former that can give the mind any idea of the shape and magnitude of the latter?

Again, what proportion in the spaces between places on the map and the spaces between places they represent? An inch in once place, and it may be one hundred or one thousand miles in the other. Maps, then, give no idea of the contiguity or remoteness of places to the young pupil. They may to a more mature, experienced mind; one that can form some idea of the proportion between the one and the other; but the scholar does

Not, cannot measure by this artificial relation. The teacher, then, must assist the learner where language and maps necessarily fail; but the maps and the language of the book, to the teacher, represent and describe objects and places so well, that he can form a correct conception of them.

He supposes the child can do the same; not thinking that it is a new language to the young beginner, and one that has no resemblance to the things described or represented; or if the resemblance of the map does offer a little help, it is not enough to transport the mind of the pupil to the place or object in question, and give it any true conception. He therefore does not come down and aid the pupil where other helps end, and his scholars learn geography without making any application of it to the earth! !

Fifthly, there is too much said of dress, and fashions, and manners, and people; the pupils are led to think of persons, and not of places. Geography should be studied for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the surface of the earth. It is, in fact, a description of this part of our planet. Its mountains, rivers, lakes, islands, oceans, and continents should be particularly attended to. The smaller and greater artificial divisions, and the varied products, and the broad characteristics in animals and men in the different climates of the earth, should be made known by the study of geography.

But instead of these noble, heart-stirring subjects, which fill the mind with all that is grand and beautiful, varied and harmonious, the frivolities of fashions, the oddities of manners and customs, and the petty differences of nations, lead away the mind and direct the attention to that which is of little comparative value, and soon lost from the memory. Geography, too, often becomes the biography of the human race, or takes the place of history, and relates the doings of men and nations. But the object of geography is space, not time—the actual appearance of things as they now are.

#### NATURAL HISTORY IN COMMON SCHOOLS.

##### No. I.

This useful and intensely interesting subject is almost entirely neglected in our common schools. Not one pupil in a thousand, ever learns a single lesson, in either the mineral, vegetable, or animal kingdoms.—The young farmer learns nothing of the varieties of soil, its nature and composition, and its peculiar preparation for different grains—he obtains no knowledge of the nature and growth of vegetables, or the properties and influence of the "life-giving air." The most important information for his business, the school does not give him.

The little knowledge that he acquires of his business, he is obliged to get by ignorant experience and blind observation. The mechanic does not study the nature, pliability, and uses of the minerals and metals; nor does he learn the beauty, strength and durability of the various timbers. The laborer, in his experiments, has no science to assist him; he is preparing nature to administer to his necessities, without knowing her rules of action! he knows nothing, for his school has given him no opportunity to know, of his own physical nature, nor of

the properties of the natural world around him.

He cannot therefore, conform his life and conduct to the relations which exist between matter and his physical nature. He has no means of foreseeing the infringement of the organic laws. In his school he has never learned the most common and simple truths in physiology or anatomy. The structure and uses, the layers, the mucous coat, &c. of the skin, the common school student learns nothing of.

He is not told that the skin is the seat of perspiration—the regulator of animal heat, and the seat of absorption. He does not see the sympathy between the skin and the other organs of life, nor the causes of suppressed perspiration, (an action which brings on the most of our disorders,) nor the connexion between the skin and the nervous system. Being ignorant of this vital organ, he abuses and neglects it. He gives no attention to suitable clothing, to ventilation, nor to washing and bathing; for he has no information on these subjects.

He has learned nothing of the structure and action of the muscles, nor of the degree and kind of exercise which they require to give them strength, elasticity, and health. He has no acquaintance whatever with anatomy, and knows not that the bones are composed of animal and earthly matter, and that they are essential to motion, and to the security of the vital organs; he does not study the growth and decay of the bones, nor perceive the advantages of their vitality and insensibility, and their adaptation to contained parts.

#### ENCOURAGEMENT.

If at one time, and in one place, certain individuals become better, why should not the whole mass improve? If partial societies become more perfect, why should it not happen with society at large?

We see neighborhoods, districts and towns becoming, almost instantaneously, more inquiring, more intelligent and more respectable and influential; and we also see certain individuals in almost every circle, however adverse the circumstances, suddenly starting from the stupidity of their associates, and rising into knowledge, influence and respect. What one neighborhood or individual has done, every neighborhood or individual may do. Cato remarked, "I can do whatever MAN has done."

#### CAUSES OF HUMAN MISERY.

The natural causes of human misery may be reduced to two: ignorance and immorality. Both are great. Philosophers are right in recommending the cultivation of intellect, and by doing so, many disorders will be removed, but the aim will not be attained without attending with the same care to the moral nature of man.—*Spurzheim.*

#### EDUCATION IN MISSISSIPPI.

An inhabitant of this state, and a correspondent of the Sunday School Journal, says:

"The conclusion my own mind would draw from what I myself see, and from what I learn from others, is this—

"Of the whole number of children in the country,

"One-tenth are well educated;

"One-fifth tolerably well educated, being taught to read, write and cipher, pretty accurately;

"One-third, or a little more, having a provision irregular and precarious, are taught to read, write and cipher, at least in some measure.

"For the education of another third, there is no adequate provision.

"Hence it is no uncommon thing to find many children in this country who cannot read or write at all.

"With the above views of my own on this subject, I find, upon examination, that others, who are acquainted with the state of things in this country, fully concur."

#### THE IGNORANT MAN.

He is too often, the creature of impressions and impulses—the unresisting slave of sensual appetites—the ready dupe of the quack—the thrall of the fanatic, and, above all, the passive instrument of the political agitator, whose sinister views and falsehoods he is unable to detect, and who, by flattering his passions and prejudices, has power to sway him, like an overgrown child, to his purposes of injustice, violence and destruction.

#### AN UNFORTUNATE CONCEIT.

There are many who look upon the current education for all ranks in this country, as a model of perfection. As the Edinburgh Review, (No. 116, page 541,) says, "We are even ignorant of our wants. In fact, the difficulty of all educational improvement in Britain, lies less in the amount, however enormous, of work to be performed, than in the notion that not a great deal is requisite. Our pedagogical ignorance is only equalled by our pedagogical conceit; and where few are competent to understand, all believe themselves qualified to decide."

"Oh for the coming of that glorious time  
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth  
And best protection, this imperial realm,  
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
An obligation; on her part, to teach  
Them who are bound to serve her and obey;  
Binding herself by statute to secure,  
For all the children whom her soil maintains,  
The rudiments of letters; and to inform  
The mind with moral and religious truth!"

*Wordsworth, Excursion, p. 400.*

#### CITIZEN'S MANUAL.

This admirable work, noticed in our February number, has been unanimously adopted as a class book in the Albany Academy.

The secretary of the state of Pennsylvania, recommends that ten thousand dollars be appropriated annually to the support of two institutions for the preparation of common school teachers, to be connected with some two of the colleges now in existence.

The CULTIVATOR, a monthly publication of 16 quarto pages each, conducted by J. BUEL, and devoted exclusively to agriculture and the improvement of young men, is forwarded to subscribers from this office, at fifty cents per annum, paid in advance.

*Power-Press of Hoffman & White.*